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ABSTRACT

A description is given of a project, called "A Collaborative Approach to Leadership in Supervision," initiated between the University of New Hampshire and several public schools. This project was designed to address: (1) the continuing preparation of principals who have primary responsibility for supervising and evaluating teachers as part of their roles as instructional leaders in the schools; and (2) the preparation of cooperating classroom teachers as more effective supervisors of graduate teaching interns and undergraduate exploring teachers. The 5-year program is structured on the triad model for supervision. In this model, the unversity supervisor observes the graduate student teaching intern during the academic year, using a clinical supervision strategy in which the supervisor meets with the intern for pre-conference, observation, and post-conference sessions. Meetings often involve the cooperating teacher as well, thus forming a "triad." This paper describes the role and responsibilities of each of the participants in the program. The training of the cooperating teacher for supervisory responsibilities is also discussed, as well as the organization and structure of the collaborating team and the relationships between its members. Issues and problems in the collaborative supervision model are considered. (JD)

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MENTORING: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATIVE SUPERVISION IN THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE FIVE-YEAR TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

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Introduction: Description of the Collaborative Supervision Project

In January, 1985, a three year federally funded collaborative project was initiated between the University of New Hampshire and several SAU #56 public schools. This project was designed to address: 1) the continuing preparation of principals who have primary responsibility for supervising and evaluating teachers as part of their roles as instructional leaders in the schools; and 2) the preparation of cooperating classroom teachers as more effective supervisors of graduate teaching interns and undergraduate exploring teachers. In this context, the project, called a COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TO LEADERSHIP IN SUPERVISION (Oja and Ham, 1987), involved several members of the UNH Education Department faculty as well as principals and teachers from the following schools: Great Falls, Hilltop, Maple Wood, Rollinsford, and Oyster River Elementary Schools and Oyster River and Somersworth Middle Schools.

The timeline for this Supervision Project was divided into three phases. In Phase One, principals were invited to participate in a Collaborative Leadership Group. Along with the project director (from the schools) and the principal investigator (from the university), they helped form Collaborative Teacher Supervision Groups in each school. In Phase Two, university faculty worked with the principal and teacher groups to explore the link between theories of adult development and alternative approaches to supervision. The groups learned and used the process of investigation called Collaborative Action Research. In Phase Three, participants are continuing to demonstrate, share, and refine their experiences in matching supervisory practices to the developmental stages/needs of their

supervisees. The immediate significance and value of this Project lies in its documented refinement of the supervisory skills of principals, teachers, and university faculty and its impact in promoting the personal/professional development of each participant. There are alternative models for school-based supervision and linkage with university field experiences. Together we have established a network of school and university contacts who will institutionalize successful project processes and goals.

The formal organization, leadership, and funding for this Supervision Project (from OERI) ends in 1988. All participants, however, believe that the Project and the role it is currently playing must continue in the schools and the university. The University Education Department has agreed to continue funding coordinator positions for Project teachers who would work collaboratively with cooperating teachers and interns within their school and between the school and university, especially in concert with the supervisor assigned to the school. (The stipend for this position is set at $1000 annually.) The participants have approached the SAU #56 School Board with a proposed budget that includes requests for a project leadership role stipend, stipends for teacher substitutes, clerical expenses and budget items to include professional development through conference attendence, speakers invited to come to the district, and a professional library in supervision for the district.

School and University participants initated a School - University Task Force on Improved Supervision during Phase One of the project to increase and sustain the university and public school collaboration. Teachers,

principals, university supervisors, teacher education committee faculty, and the Director of Field Experiences serve on this committee. Through the successes of the project, the university faculty are promoting the concept of cluster placement of student teacher interns in schools and collaborative supervision as defined in the project components.

The Role of Cooperating Teacher in Collaborative Supervision: How it differs from the traditional role of cooperating teacher

Over the last twelve years the university supervision faculty in the five-year teacher preparation program have worked to develop a successful triad model for supervision. In this model the university supervisor observes the graduate student teaching intern every two weeks during their academic year internship using a clinical supervision strategy in which the supervisor meets with the intern for a preconference, observation, and post conference. Biweekly meetings at the school often involve the cooperating teacher as well as the intern and university supervisor, thus the term "triad" meeting. In 1985 the university supervision faculty, which meets monthly in a "SUPE" group, developed a twelve page Intern Evaluation Form which is developmental in nature from the beginning to the end of the internship year and is written in terms of teaching competencies, each with a list of behavioral indicators. Cooperating teachers edited drafts of this Evaluation Form as it was being field tested and revised. In the triad model, the cooperating teacher, the intern, and the university supervisor each complete the Evaluation form for the intern at mid year and at the end of the year. The cooperating teacher's and the university supervisor's evaluation, as well

as the intern's self-evaluation, are used in the triad discussions to assess the intern's competencies in pedegogy and content and point the direction for further development.

Traditionally, and even in the triad model with the Intern Evaluation form, most cooperating teachers left the majority of the formal supervision and evaluation responsibilities up to the university supervisor. In the new Collaborative Supervision model, the cooperating teacher takes on more supervising responsibility.

Cooperating teachers in the Collaborative Supervision Project have applied the knowledge in cognitive developmental stage theories and models of supervision with interns and exploring teaching students (described below). Cooperating teachers in the Project helped to facilitate the placement of prospective interns for the next school year and facilitated an initial matching of the intern's cognitive developmental level with specific supervisory models/techniques which could be incorporated into the early supervision of the intern. Monthly meetings of the project's teacher/principal supervision groups have emphasized the development, field testing, and revision of supervision competencies with behavioral indicators for effective supervision. These competency lists are one way of assessing and documenting growth in supervision (and are modeled upon the Intern Evaluation Form which cooperating teachers liked very much). The Supervision competency lists are also used as self-directed development by cooperating teachers. Cooperating teachers have investigated methods of data collection which enhance supervision, such as reflective journals, videotapes and audiotapes with their own interns,

logged supervisory interactions, and minutes of meetings where principals and teachers discuss issues in their supervision. Role playing of various supervisory situations has been a useful technique at monthly Teacher/Principal Supervision Group Meetings to further familiarize participants with stages of development.

Assuming a greater supervision role allows a regular classroom teacher to extend him/herself beyond the classroom, yet not leave the classroom. It affords an opportunity to learn more about working collaboratively with colleagues while also learning about the supervisory process and how that process relates to adult development. It offers various opportunities to extend one's professionalism.

Cooperating teachers are taking on more supervisory responsibility in two kinds of preservice teaching experiences in the university's five-year teacher preparation program. First, cooperating teachers in the collaborative supervision project have taken on greater supervision responsibilities in the Exploring Teaching Course which is the first required course in the teacher education program. The Exploring Teaching course is most often taken by undergraduates and successful recommendations by the cooperating teacher and university supervisor are needed before the student can take any further education courses or apply for the post-graduate internship required for certification. The second area in which cooperating teachers in the Collaborative Supervision project have taken on greater supervisory responsibilities is with the graduate student teaching interns, placed in classrooms for a full year.

Cooperating Teachers in the Exploring Teaching Course

Exploring teaching is a course designed for undergraduate students who are considering teaching as a career. Usually (but not limited to) college sophomores, these students spend a minimum of five hours each week in a school classroom and two hours per week in a university seminar usually taught on-site in the school. They are required to explore, investigate, and experience as many aspects of public education as possible. In addition, they are encouraged to further study those areas in which they are most interested.

Exploring teaching students are expected, as much as possible, to work with children one-on-one, in small groups, and as a whole class. They participate in recess and lunch duties with their cooperating teachers; observe in classrooms other than the one to which they are assigned; and investigate the roles of other school personnel such as the principal, special education director, reading teacher, guidance counselor, and school board member. They may also prepare instructional materials, plan and teach their own lessons, correct children's work, and plan and carry out field trips.

Compared with student teachers or interns, exploring teaching students spend considerably less time in the classroom, usually lack teaching experience, and are not yet familiar with educational theories or current research. Cooperating teachers in the Collaborative Supervision Project take all of these factors into account when deciding how best to supervise these students. In most cases, exploring teaching students benefit most from direct supervision, although the cooperating teacher must still keep

in mind and address the students' areas of interest and concern.

The cooperating teacher also determines the overall developmental level at which the student is functioning in order to structure a successful exploring teaching experience. This could be done by using standardized testing developed by some of the theorists, but time and financial constraints make this method impractical. Cooperating teachers can just as easily use more informal methods to accomplish the same purpose. One such method is to observe the exploring teaching student in interactions and conversations with children, staff, and peers. The cooperating teacher can also describe situations which might occur during the course of the school day and ask the exploring student to explain how he or she might deal with them. Still another method of determining a student's developmental level is to ask for responses to such questions as "What is education?" "What is the role of a teacher?" and "What would the ideal school be like?"

Once the student's approximate developmental level is determined, the cooperating teacher plans supervision strategies based on that level. These include structuring experiences and formulating responses which provide both support and challenge. Students can benefit from objective feedback about lessons and interactions and are encouraged to draw their own conclusions about what they see and how they have performed before the cooperating teacher makes suggestions and recommendations. (One of the hardest decisions to make as a cooperating teachers is when NOT to answer questions!)

The cooperating teacher can also supervise exploring teaching students more effectively by becoming an integral part of the students' weekly seminar. A new role tried out in the Project was that of Exploring Teaching Course Collaborator. Cooperating teachers taking on this role plan and implement discussions and activities in partnership with the university supervisor. This adds an important dimension to the students' seminars and gives the cooperating teacher a further opportunity to ask the pertinent questions which will challenge students' thinking about their teaching experience.

Cooperating Teachers in the Intern Cluster Placement Model

An important element to the success of the cooperating teacher's role with interns in the Collaborative Supervision project is the cluster placement of several interns in one school and the assignment of one university supervisor to all the interns in that school. Such a placement provides a built-in support and challenge system for the cooperating teachers, university supervisor, and interns on a daily basis. Everyone gets to know each other well; to interact with one another; to attend the same intern seminar; and to have contact with the same university supervisor, thus breaking the traditional isolation which is often felt by public school cooperating teachers and university supervisors. Such a placement of a cluster of six interns in one school affords the university supervisors more quality time for observations and conferencing, with less travel time.

The Collaborative Supervison Project builds upon and enhances the traditional triad model through its design components which allow each

cooperating teacher to have more direct involvement with all the interns and with all the other cooperating teachers in the school; thus there are more models of teaching to observe, more methodology to explore, more grade levels to observe, more opinions to consider. Throughout the weekly cooperating teacher and intern meetings during two years of the project, it has become evident that all participants were being stimulated cognitively as evidenced by increased frequency of educational issues being discussed outside regular meetings, during lunch time, or in the hallways. Both personal and professional growth is being stimulated.

The Cooperating teacher/Intern (CTI) Field Coordinator

The Collaborative Supervision Project established a new coordinator position for a cooperating teacher in schools having cluster placement of interns. The Cooperating Teacher/Intern (CTI) Coordinator supervises an intern fulltime in his/her own classroom and maintains full responsibility as a classroom teacher. Thus, the teacher in this role fulfills the traditional role of a cooperating teacher working with an intern. However, the CTI role reaches far beyond, with added responsibilities, acting mainly as a resource on-site to the cooperating teachers and interns to help coordinate activities, observations, and meetings, and to provide the leadership necessary to enable the cooperating teachers and interns to work cohesively in the school. The CTI Coordinator observes other interns as requested by other cooperating teachers and/or the university supervisor assigned to the school. So far the observations by the CTI coordinator have been done during planning times when the children were attending music class, physical education class, lunch and recess. The CTI Coordinator helps interns to plan observations in other classrooms

intra-school and at other elementary schools outside the intern's placement site. At times, the CTI coordinator acted as a mediator and support to a cooperating teacher.

The CTI coordinator assumes more of a leadership role within the school, specifically with the cooperating teachers and interns involved in the Collaborative Supervision Project. Many schedules need to be accomodated as meeting dates and times are agreed upon. For instance, a survey was distributed by the CTI coordinator in the early fall to help determine the cooperating teachers' and interns' preferred days of the week and times to meet. Formal meetings were then held every other Thursday morning before school from 7:30-8:15 am. Occassional impromptu lunch time meetings were held throughout the year with smaller numbers of cooperating teachers and/or interns who wanted to meet on a particular day to discuss particular questions in teaching or supervising. Because of the CTI coordinator's active facilitation, attendance at these regular meetings has been high and motivation of all participants has remained high. Agendas at the meetings began with such topics as classroom management and discipline, and developed into discussions of long range goals as teachers, the current internship program, writing resumes, and the interviewing process during job hunting. The group generated the agendas prior to the meetings, with topics depending on the immediate needs and interests of the interns. An underlying theme all year is to offer support and challenge to each other. The CTI coordinator meets informally with cooperating teachers and interns on a daily basis in order to try to continue the support and offer assistance if needed. These brief encounters often proved valuable to interns, particularly, to get daily

feedback.

In addition to the joint meetings of cooperating teachers and interns in the school, cooperating teachers met with each other regularly (without interns) once a month to discuss specific supervision issues and concerns. The strengths of the CTI coordinator's role are many. Being a full time cooperating teacher seems to give credibility to the position of the CTI coordinator because one can more closely relate to the current needs of an intern. Having a previously established bond of trust with most of the cooperating teachers in the school is also most beneficial. A CTI coordinator should also have a repertoire of interpersonal communication skills which can be applied daily, with potential leadership skills as well.

Summary: How Cooperating Teachers and University Faculty Collaborate in Supervision

Cooperating teachers in the Project work more collaboratively with the university supervisor. As a group cooperating teachers at one school meet monthly with the university supervisor to discuss supervision and share applications of their learnings; this is in addition to the weekly meetings cooperating teachers hold with each other and in addition to the biweekly triad meetings the university supervisor holds with an individual intern and cooperating teacher. A sense of collegiality and community is developed as principals, teachers, and the university supervisor meet regularly to discuss supervisory issues. By working together in this way they build a communication network between the schools and university.

Interns meet together in a seminar weekly with their university supervisor to get feedback and discuss a range of issues in their teaching; this weekly seminar has been a university requirement for many years. It is the proposed design of the CTI coordinator role that the CTI coordinator work closely with the university supervisor. This did not occur at first during the project because the university supervisor assigned to the school was resistant to the role of the CTI coordinator and was not willing to share the intern responsibilities nor allow the coordinator to attend any of the intern's weekly seminars. This was indeed a problem (and discussed further below). Currently, the new university supervisor for the school has worked collaboratively with the CTI coordinator. The CTI coordinator role can be a resource to any willing, flexible supervisor; the university supervisor this year is finding it valuable to have an on-site person to oversee the daily occurances and continue daily interactions and feedback with interns which the university supervisor cannot do because of the time constraints of six clinical observation visits to each of six interns per semester.

The CTI coordinator and other cooperating teachers do serve as liaisons between the university and public school as members of the School-University Task Force for Improved Supervision. They attend monthly meetings, relay pertinent information back to the schools, gather data from cooperating teachers and interns to bring to the meeting, and assist in making the intern placement process more efficient and effective.

As the Collaborative Supervision Program develops further, and more

school sites choose CTI coordinators, these people could work together and share ideas and supports that have been productive in their own groups. There could also be more interchanges between different school districts with cooperating teachers and interns in the cluster model; such interchanges could broaden everyone's perspective and increase the efficacy of the internship supervision experience.

Issues and Problems in the Collaborative Supervision Model

1. Different philosophical positions regarding a new supervisory position for the schools.

In its initial meetings the School-University Task Force for Improved Supervision realized that its members, representing all principals and teachers and university faculty, seemed to represent two different philosophical positions regarding the need and role description of a potentially new supervisory position in the project -- a Cooperating Teacher/Intern (CTI) Field Coordinator. This person would serve as a liaison between the public schools and the university and have more direct contact will all cooperating teachers and interns in a cluster placement at one school site.

At the Task Force meetings in the first year of the project, differing views were explored. Some people felt that the current role of the cooperating teacher could be expanded and enriched, rather than creating a new position, and this expanded role would involve another level of supervision involving much more collaboration between cooperating teachers, interns, and the university supervisor in the school. Other

members of the Task Force expressed the view that not all cooperating teachers have the time, interest, skills, or desire to expand their present role beyond the classroom. These people felt that the creation of the CTI role could prove effective, particularly as a liaison between public schools and university personnel, to create and help sustain that crucial link.

It was crucial in the development of this project that the Task Force decided to draft possible role descriptions for more than one model of collaborative supervision. We developed two possible models and promoted the need for particular schools to adapt these models to their own contexts. The two models we started with were the CTI Field Coordinator in what was called the differentiated model of supervision, and the egalitarian model in which all cooperating teachers meet regularly as a group with the university supervisor in order to address specific questions of intern supervision. In both models all cooperating teachers assumed more responsibility with their own interns and worked collaboratively with other cooperating teachers and interns in the school.

It was also crucial in the development of the project that, consistent with the collaborative nature and philosophy of the project, the Task Force offered to each Teacher/Principal Supervision Group the opportunity to meet and decide which supervisory model would best match their school, staff development goals, and individual needs. One school site chose the egalitarian model with all cooperating teachers assuming equal and greater supervision responsibilities. A second school site met, and upon consensus, decided that if one teacher were willing to assume this new CTI role, the cooperating teachers and principals would support it. Two

teachers offered to assume the position, but then one person withdrew after further discussion of the involved responsibilities. Thus, with total support from colleagues, the new CTI Field Coordinator became a functioning position in the school. It is clear that the initial group selection process for the CTI Coordinator is a sensitive issue as is the careful consideration of the qualifications and preparation of that person.

2. Relationship of the cooperating teachers with the university supervisor in a Collaborative Supervision Model

In collaborative supervision, university supervisors develop more collegial relationships with cooperating teachers. University faculty have the opportunity for new learning as they share supervision responsibility with the cooperating teachers. During our first year, in one of our school sites, we were confronted with a university supervisor who was unwilling to collaborate. He preferred the traditional triad model, conferencing with individuals. This was our pilot year for the CTI coordinator in a school which had chosen the differentiated model of supervision. In this school it was the CTI coordinator who facilitated the weekly meetings of all cooperating teachers and interns. Teachers and the principal in the school developed a greater sense of collegiality and community as they met together regularly to discuss supervisory processes, but the university intern supervisor was not involved. A communication network was built within the school but not between the school and university. In the second year, the new university supervisor was chosen because she was willing to collaborate in the supervision. The Director of Field Experiences at the university was careful to place university supervisors

in project sites only if they were willing to undertake the collaborative supervision model.

The university supervisor in a school using the egalitarian model experienced close collaboration with cooperating teachers. He was less involved in intensive classroom observation, but more involved in weekly contact with all teachers, interns, and the principal. This supervisor found that his consistent regular contacts in the school were not always substantive but were always strategic contacts -- important to maintain collaborative supervision and problem solving. This supervisor, with eighteen years experience in supervising interns, said it was a most exciting year meeting with a cluster of cooperating teachers regularly. The cluster placement and collaborative supervision allowed an espirit de corps with interns and the school unlike anything he had experienced before. With his own learning more about adult development theories, this supervisor said he became more aware of the differences among interns and more respectful for where they were stuck and from where they were growing. He realized that at each stage of development, the person (and the personality) has very good reasons for what is done. Finally, he pointed to the constant focus almost every minute in the group meetings on supervision in the big picture, not just the details. Together in the teacher/principal supervision group meetings, the university supervisor, cooperating teachers, and the principal discussed ways to more effectively individualize their supervision strategies; they helped identify 1) what the next step might be for an intern at a particular time and 2) what a next step might be that all intern's could work on together. The principal felt that, rather than minimizing the university supervisor's

role, collaborative supervision became more exciting and made the university's role even more valuable.

The university supervisors meet monthly in a "SUPE" group to discuss their issues and concerns in supervision. University supervisors in the Collaborative Supervision project schools have shared their experiences with other supervisors. We recognize that some university supervisors will continue to prefer individual conferencing to collaborative supervision. And not all intern placements can be in clusters. However, as cluster placement of interns increases, university supervisors interested and willing to be involved in collaborative supervison will be matched to these school cluster sites.

References:

Oja, Sharon N. and Ham, Maryellen C. (1987). A collaborative approach to leadership in supervision. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, Washington, D.C. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 277 696). This paper outlines the research base, theoretical framework, and design of the content and process of the Collaborative Supervision instructional model with its focus on the content of adult development stages and alternative supervision strategies and the process of collaborative (action) research.

Competencies and Behavioral Indicators in Educational Supervision in three areas: Adult Development, Instructional Leadership, and Collaboration. Developed by a Teacher Supervision Group of the OERI funded project, A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TO LEADERSHIP IN SUPERVISION. For further information contact: Dr. Maryellen C. Ham, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Colchester, VT. 05446, or Dr. Sharon Nodie Oja, Associate Professor of Education, University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH 03824.

Intern Evaluation Form. Developed by university supervisors in the Five Year Teacher Education Program at the University of New Hampshire. For further information contact: Dr. Judith Kull, Assistant Professor of Education, University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH 03824.